

REVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND PHYSICAL INFORMATION

POPULATION

The demographic information relating to Asheville has been reviewed to gain an understanding of the unique characteristics of the community and to identify factors that may influence recreation and park planning. Understanding characteristics of the population provides a means of customizing recommendations concerning programs and facilities for particular age groups, income levels, gender, or ethnicity. The following information concerning the population of Asheville identifies basic data concerning age, race, ethnic, and gender composition. To better define the planning area for this report, the City is divided into the five areas: Central, North, South, East, and West.

Table 1-1

Asheville Population 1960-1996			
Year	Population	Annualized Percent Change	Land Area (square miles)
1960	60,192	11.9%	—
1970	57,681	-4.4%	—
1980	53,583	-7.4%	29.09
1990	61,855	13.0%	34.9
1996	68,339	9.5%	40.3

Source: 1950-1990 U.S. Census; 1996 population estimated by City of Asheville Planning Department

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The City of Asheville is projected to be approximately 69,900 people by the year 2000 and approximately 76,100 by the end of the 17-year planning period. At an estimated annual growth rate of .58%, the City is projected to account for approximately 33.7% of the total county population by the year 2015. The population for the planning area is projected to be 100,382 by the year 2000 and approximately 109,417 people by the end of the planning period (2015). The planning/study area will account for 48.4% of the total county population by 2015. Residential development, natural increases, continued immigration, and annexation influence the future growth of the City. These influences will cause annual increases in both the City and County by the end of the planning period.

Table 1-2

Populations Projections 1990-2015						
Location	1990	1996	2000	2005	2010	2015
Asheville	61,855	68,339	69,900	71,900	74,000	76,100
Buncombe County	174,821	190,852	201,306	209,528	218,227	225,891
Planning Area	96,071	98,202	100,382	103,098	106,155	109,417

Source: 1990 U.S. Census; Office of State Planning, 1995; Asheville Planning Department (city estimates 1996-2015)

Age Distribution/Median Age

Like many communities in the nation, Asheville's population is aging. Persons older than 65 years old account for the greatest gain in population over the past two decades. This can be attributed to improved nutrition and medical advances that result in longer life expectancy. Additionally, birth rates are lower and the "baby boomer" generation is moving into middle age. Information available for Buncombe County indicates persons under 18 years old will decrease from 22.4% in 1990 to 19.8% in 2015, while persons over 65 years old will increase from 16.1% to 20.2% within the same time span. Past experience has indicated the City and the County have demonstrated similar trends regarding age distribution. Accordingly, it can be assumed estimated changes in age distribution will continue to be similar throughout the planning period. The median age for the City in 1990 was 37.9 years as compared with 36.7 years for the County. Median age for the County in the year 2015 is estimated to be 43.87 years and the City is expected to be very similar.

Table 1-3

Buncombe County Age Groups - Percent of Population						
Group	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015
Under 18	29.1	22.4	22.3	21.4	20.8	19.8
18-64	57.2	61.6	60.8	61.4	60.9	60.1
Over 65	13.7	16.1	16.9	17.2	18.2	20.2
Median Age	33.1	36.7	39.9	41.4	42.6	43.9

Source: 1980-1990 U.S. Census; Office of State Planning, 1995

RACE

The non-white population of Asheville and Buncombe County continues to increase and diversify. The number of non-white persons is increasing at a greater rate than white persons. In 1970, the proportion of white to non-white persons for Asheville was 81.5% to 18.4% and the County was 91% white to 9% non-white. In 1990, non-whites accounted for 20.9% of the Asheville population and 8.9% of the County population, while whites accounted for 79.1% for Asheville and 91.1% for the County. The trend of increased minority/non-white population is expected to continue within Buncombe County and Asheville throughout the planning period. It is anticipated that by 2020 the County population will be 9.7% non-white and 90.3% white. Similar to the County, proportions for Asheville are expected to increase by the end of the planning period.

Table 1-4

Asheville Racial Composition			
	1970	1980	1990
White	81.5%	78%	79.1%
Non-White	18.4%	21.8%	20.9%

Source: 1970-1990 U.S. Census

Table 1-5

Buncombe County Racial Composition						
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
White	91%	90.9%	91.1%	90.9%	90.7%	90.3%
Non-White	9%	9.1%	8.9%	9.1%	9.3%	9.7%

Source: 1970-1990 U.S. Census; Office of State Planning, 1995

GENDER

The ratio of males to females has remained constant since 1960/1970. In 1990, males accounted for 45% of the population and females 55%. Influencing factors such as mortality, longevity, and fertility should ensure this trend continues through the planning period.

Table 1-6

Asheville Male/Female Percent of Population			
	1970	1980	1990
Male	45%	45%	45%
Female	55%	55%	55%

Source: 1970-1990 U.S. Census

HOUSEHOLDS

Between 1970 and 1990 the number of households in Asheville increased 34.7% or more than four times the population growth rate. This implies household composition changes have occurred due to social behavioral influences. During this period, the number of persons per household dropped from 2.8 to 2.2 in Asheville and 3.0 to 2.4 in Buncombe County. The rate should continue to drop in Buncombe County during the remaining years of the planning period and past experience indicates the City will follow the same trend.

Table 1-7

Household Size			
	1970	1980	1990
Buncombe County			
Households	47,248	60,274	70,802
Persons/Household	3	2.6	2.4
Asheville			
Households	20,061	21,821	27,027
Persons/Household	2.8	2.4	2.2

Source: 1970-1990 U.S. Census; Office of State Planning, 1995

The decline in household size can be attributed to changes in attitudes toward marriage, family composition, and the increase in non-family households. A high divorce rate has resulted in an increase of single parent households, both male and female. Between 1970 and 1990 the number of female-headed households increased by 110.4% while male-headed households increased 133.2%. The most obvious result of this trend is children living with single parents have increased and children in married households have declined. The overall trend appears to be slowing and will likely stabilize, however the effects of high divorce rates significantly influences the makeup of the family unit.

Table 1-8

Asheville Family Relationship			
Gender	1970	1980	1990
Married couples w/children under 18	5,967	4,252	4,089
Female householders	2,542	3,011	3,759
Male householders	412	472	742

Source: 1970-1990 U.S. Census

INCOME

Average household income in Buncombe County increased 72.7% from \$8,781 in 1970 to \$32,131 in 1990. Asheville's average household income rose from \$15,815 to \$29,067 or 45.6%. From 1990 to 2015, average household income is expected to rise similar to the historical rates presented in Table 1-9. In addition, the percentage of households making less than \$10,000 (low income) has decreased between 1970 and 1990. The only negative trend associated with the rates of increased income is that overall purchasing power will likely decline through the planning period due to escalated costs of living. Therefore, the average household will be harder pressed to find discretionary money for nonessential items and activities for recreation and entertainment.

Besides the population data acquired for Asheville and Buncombe County as a whole, demographic profiles have been provided for each of the five areas. Table 1-10 identifies selected demographic profile information for each area such as population, race, education level, and occupations.

Table 1-9

Buncombe County Average Household Income			
	1970	1980	1990
Buncombe County	\$8,781	\$16,837	\$32,131

Source: 1970-1990 U.S. Census

Table 1-10

Planning Area Profile					
Planning Area	North	South	East	West	Central
Population (April 1996 est.)*	15,303	19,906	15,419	34,251	13,323
Estimated Population 2015*	18,609	29,271	17,488	32,232	11,817
Race (percent of district's population)*					
White	92%	87.3%	83.8%	88.8%	48.7%
Non-White	8%	12.7%	16.2%	11.2%	51.3%
Highest education level attained (percent of district's population age 18 years or older)					
No high school diploma or GED	8.9%	17%	24.9%	32% 32%	
High school graduate	18%	26.4%	27.4%	33.2%	25%
Some college	21.6%	19.9%	20.6%	15%	19%
Associate degree	7.6%	6%	6.4%	7.5%	5.9%
Bachelor degree	25%	20%	15.3%	9.3%	12%
Graduate or professional degree	18.2%	10.7%	5.8%	3.5%	6%
Occupations (percent of district's population age 16 years or older and employed)					
Executive	42%	30.1%	24.3%	20.7%	27.2%
Technical/Administration	14.5%	17%	19.3%	20.7%	12.1%
Sales and Service	28.2%	25%	33%	28.2%	34.3%
Farming and Forestry	1.3%	1.4%	0.70%	1.1%	1.2%
Laborers	14%	26%	22.7%	29.2%	25.2%
Average Household Income	\$39,322	\$32,608	\$29,487	\$32,646	\$22,091

* Estimated

Source: 1990 U.S. Census; City of Asheville Planning Department

ECONOMY

Buncombe County has traditionally found economic strength in manufacturing, non-manufacturing, and tourism. Manufacturing industries include textiles, electrical components, precision instruments, packaging products, and printing and publishing products. Non-manufacturing industry includes retail trade and services, particularly in the health care services.

In the mid 1980s, Asheville experienced a series of activities which directly impacted the success of the current economy. Three large redevelopment projects in the downtown area were completed. These were the Pack Plaza Project, a mixed retail/office complex including a cultural arts center and parking deck; the Wall Street Project, a retail/office complex and parking deck, and large renovation projects on Haywood Street including the Haywood Park Hotel, a retail/office complex and an apartment project. In addition, two regional shopping centers were constructed in the Asheville area: River Ridge Outlet Mall in the east and West Ridge Center in the west.

Asheville is currently developing new economic opportunities. The City has entered into an agreement with the Grove Arcade Foundation to renovate the Grove Arcade in the downtown area featuring a public market, condominiums, and recreation opportunities. The proposed Biltmore Technical Park at Broadlands represents a private/public partnership to develop a high-tech industrial park in south Asheville. To enhance the business climate and economic base, Asheville is currently proposing the "Economic Development Incentives Policy" to stimulate private sector investment, spur economic growth, and create new jobs by offering grants for companies and industries seeking to relocate or expand business in the area.

In recent years, Buncombe County has benefited from the national trend of corporations locating offices in the Southeast. Corporate offices are considered attractive to most communities because they pay good salaries and place little demand on public services. The County has drawn several high-tech manufacturing establishments that produce electronic components. Despite the trends regarding corporate location, health care and manufacturing facilities continue to dominate the Buncombe County economy.

The overall economic picture in Buncombe County is positive. Net new job growth is up 3,100 over 1995, retail sales are up 9%, and the employment rate is up 3.3% while the unemployment rate is near 3%. Other economic indicators on tourism, construction activity, auto registrations, and population growth all show positive trends. Yet the County's optimism is an uneasy one. In 1995, four industrial plants closed, affecting 600 manufacturing jobs. A fifth plant will close in early 1998, affecting 460 jobs. In that regard, 1995 continued a similar trend begun in 1990. Since that time, over 20 manufacturing firms have closed or downsized, affecting nearly 5,000 jobs. Though most of those jobs have been replaced with new or expanding industrial projects, manufacturing employment remains stagnant in comparison with other sectors.

Asheville's role of economic leadership in the region has grown stronger due to the consolidation of efforts by both the public and private sectors of the community. While some manufacturing jobs have been lost, new jobs have been created, and the tax base in Asheville and Buncombe County has continued to rise. The challenge of finding new ways and means to strengthen and diversify the Asheville area economy continues. Factors such as the future shift in employment patterns, the fierce competition for new business and industry in the

southeastern United States, and the limited resources available for economic promotion and recruitment have inspired the community to begin formulating, and acting upon, new aggressive

strategies to meet the goals for a healthy economy. Through the City's "Alternatives for Asheville" planning process and the Economic Development Summit sponsored by the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and the University of North Carolina at Asheville, goals and strategies are being addressed.

GROWTH TRENDS/LAND USE

Asheville's growth over the past 45 years has been erratic, reflecting the national trend of movement out of urban areas and the recent popularity of Asheville's urban neighborhoods. The City's population grew significantly (over 13%) between 1950 and 1960, due primarily to annexations. This increase was almost eliminated between 1960 and 1980, however, as the City lost population due to the movement of people to suburban areas. From 1980 to the present, the City has experienced a steady increase in population due to annexation and the movement of people to older urban neighborhoods. The steady growth experienced by Asheville during the past 15 years has changed the appearance of the City and surrounding areas. The City and the portions of Buncombe County adjacent to the City are becoming increasingly urbanized. Development between Asheville and the City of Hendersonville, primarily along the I-26 and US 25 corridors, is beginning to link the two municipalities.

Asheville has been able to retain its centralized urban core with the development and growth it has experienced during the past 10 to 15 years. The historic downtown area retains its role as the City Center with development radiating from this core. Some decentralization is occurring with the continued growth and development of activity centers in south Asheville. These activity centers provide services to residential developments and businesses within the area that compete with services historically found in the downtown core.

Thanks to the efforts of a variety of organizations, the economy of Asheville and Buncombe County is becoming increasingly diversified. While the service sector of the local economy is growing at the fastest rate, efforts to retain existing industry and to recruit new industry have resulted in a strong manufacturing sector. The large medical community, the presence of several colleges and universities in the area, and the prominence of the area as a tourist attraction contribute significantly to service sector employment. Efforts related to industrial recruitment and retention have resulted in a diversified manufacturing sector, with industrial uses ranging from automotive parts to blanket manufacturing to medical supplies.

The topography of Asheville and Buncombe County precludes the development of large industrial parks. As a result, industrial sites are scattered throughout the City. Older industrial uses are concentrated along the railroad lines and in areas served by spur lines. Newer industrial areas are primarily located south of Asheville in the I-26 and US 25 corridors where the topography is more conducive to developments requiring large land areas. It is anticipated that future industrial development will be concentrated in these corridors. Office space is concentrated in the downtown area with a number of historic structures converted to office space or mixed uses that include offices. It is predicted that future office growth will continue to be concentrated in the downtown area. Additionally, some office development will occur in the area adjacent to the Memorial Mission - St. Joseph's Hospital complex. Smaller scale offices will also be developed in the US 25 corridor to serve the growing population in the south Asheville area.

Residential development has occurred in all sectors of the City during the past 10 years. Development of single-family and multi-family housing at scattered sites throughout the City

has distributed growth to all areas of the community. South Asheville has experienced the largest share of the residential growth, as the topography is more conducive to development. The Haw Creek area on the east side of the City has experienced significant residential development during the past 10 years. In addition to scattered site development and development on the edges of the City, many older neighborhoods are being revitalized as residents reclaim these traditional neighborhoods. It is anticipated that residential development over the next five years will follow much the same pattern as the growth of the past 10 years. The largest portion of residential growth will occur in south Asheville, with other residential growth areas being Haw Creek, the Beaverdam Valley, and smaller scattered sites throughout the City.

Growth will continue in areas of the County convenient to the City but outside the city limits. In some areas this will be a continuation of existing patterns, while highway improvements will stimulate growth in other areas. The Sand Hill Road/Sardis Road area will experience a potpourri of development ranging from residential to industrial. The Avery's Creek area will continue to experience significant growth as new residential developments are constructed in this area. The US 25 corridor south of the City will continue to experience rapid residential growth due to the convenience of this area to activity centers in Asheville and Hendersonville. The widening of Fairview Road (US 74) will result in an increased rate of growth for this section of the County east of the city limits.

Growth trends expected during the planning period are as follows:

- Downtown land uses will continue to diversify, with an increase in the number of residential uses. The number of office and commercial uses in the downtown area will continue to increase.
- The Hendersonville Road (US 25) corridor will continue to experience commercial development with office development becoming more prominent in this area.
- Commercial development will continue along Brevard Road north and south of the I-26 interchange.
- New industrial growth will be concentrated south of Asheville along the US 25 corridor and in the Sardis Road/Brevard Road area near the I-26 corridor.
- The widening of Sweeten Creek Road (US 25A) will provide opportunities for commercial and industrial development along this corridor.
- The widening of Fairview Road (US 74) will result in increased development along this corridor. Most of the development will be residential with some commercial development to meet the needs of residents of this area.
- A mixture of development will occur in the Sand Hill Road/Sardis Road area.
- The Avery's Creek area will experience continued residential development.
- South Asheville will continue to experience the bulk of residential growth with a significant portion of this growth located along the US 25 corridor.

- Rehabilitation of older urban neighborhoods will continue with accompanying demographic changes.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Asheville's housing market reflects many of the trends which are occurring in housing nationwide. Including an increased demand for single family and multi-family housing; an increase in the percentage of renter-occupied versus ownership-occupied units; and an increase in the use of manufactured housing.

The City of Asheville has for many years been involved in carrying out programs designed to meet the housing needs of lower-income residents. The programs are administered by the City of Asheville Community Development Division contracting with the Housing Authority of the City of Asheville for program management. Traditionally, housing programs in Asheville, as throughout the United States, have taken the form of federally assisted and publicly constructed/managed housing communities. Recently however, a marked change in the type of housing assistance available has occurred. A shift in federal funding for housing programs has diverted funding away from the new construction of public housing communities and towards maintenance and modernization of existing units; assistance of low-income residents in the rehabilitation or construction of private homes; and support of private developers in the construction or rehabilitation of housing for low-income residents. The reduction of federal monies for all types of housing assistance created a need for new local initiatives to provide low-income housing. Community Development created a Neighborhood Housing Services Program in Asheville to provide assistance to qualified individuals for the rehabilitation and construction of dwelling units. The City is involved with non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Mountain Housing Opportunity, and Affordable Housing Coalition to assist in providing affordable housing. The revitalization of neighborhoods through public/private partnerships is a way for Asheville to ensure low- and moderate-income households can afford housing.

Historic preservation provides a link to the past through the preservation of the built environment. Asheville has six neighborhoods listed with the National Register of Historic Districts: Downtown Asheville, Grove Park, Chestnut-Liberty, Albemarle Park, Biltmore Village, and Montford. Of the six districts, Albemarle Park, Biltmore Village, and Montford are also locally designated historic districts. In addition, Asheville and Buncombe County have 32 local historic landmarks. The Historic Resources Commission (HRC) of Asheville and Buncombe County, created in 1979, evaluates historically significant neighborhoods, areas, and individual sites, and recommends designation as a Local Historic District or Local Historic Property. HRC administers design review of new construction or rehabilitation within historic areas, serves as an educational resource promoting the merits of historical preservation, and provides technical assistance to property owners and residents within the entire region. Property owners within nationally or locally registered Historic Districts can take advantage of federal and state tax credits for the rehabilitation of certified historic structures. In addition to the tax credits, local landmark property owners may apply for a property tax deferral.

TRANSPORTATION/ROADS

Major US highways serving the area include: I-40 — from McDowell County in the east through Asheville to Haywood County in the west; I-26 — from Henderson County in the south

to I-40 in Asheville; I-240 — an urban loop from I-40/I-26 interchange through west Asheville, Asheville and back to I-40 east of Asheville; US 19/23 — from Haywood County in the east, through west Asheville and then north to Madison County; US 25 — from Henderson County in the south through Asheville, to Weaverville and then to Madison County in the north; US 74A — from Henderson County in the south through Fairview to Asheville; US 70 — from McDowell County in the east through Asheville, then north along US 19/23 to intersection with US 25 in Weaverville and then north with US 25 to Madison County; and US 25A — from US 25 near Henderson County in the south, to US 25 at Biltmore Village. Primary state roads include: NC 191 — from Henderson County in the south through west Asheville to Haywood Road; NC 63 — from US 19/23 in west Asheville to Madison County in the northwest; NC 251 — from I-240 in Asheville, along the French Broad River and north to Madison County; NC 81 — from US 25 at Biltmore Village, along Swannanoa River and to east Asheville at US 70; and NC 694 — from I-240 in Asheville, to the Blue Ridge Parkway, northeast of Asheville. The Blue Ridge Parkway also transects the County from Henderson County in the southwest, through Asheville, to Yancey County in the northeast.

The lack of a “grid system” road network, historical neighborhoods, and challenging terrains lend to difficulty in disbursing traffic. This results in fairly substantial peak hour periods of congestion on some roads. Also, having an interstate (I-240) running through the downtown area contributes to this problem. The development patterns in the urban area are typical of other cities. Considerable residential development occurs through the suburban area causing an increasing number of trips occurring cross-town. Attached is a list of Local Transportation Improvement Program projects (1998-2004) for Buncombe County and the portion of Henderson County included in the Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

1. I-2500: Bridge and safety improvements and pavement rehabilitation on I-26 from I-40 to NC 146. Total length 6 miles, cost \$17.9 million, in progress, complete 1997.
2. I-2501: Pavement rehabilitation, bridge safety improvements, and guardrail on I-26 from NC 146 to south of US 25. Total length 6.6 miles, cost \$24.3 million, in progress.
3. I-100: Construct new interchange on I-40 at US 25A, cost \$8.9 million, complete 1999.
4. I-2502: Bridge rehabilitation on I-40 at the Haywood County line to west of US 19/23/74. Total length 6 miles, cost \$7.2 million, identified as a future need.
5. I-2504: Interchange revision on I-40 at US 19/23/74, cost \$3.1 million, identified as a future need.
6. I-2801: Pavement rehabilitation and safety improvements on I-40 at US 19/23/74. Total length 6.5 miles, cost \$32.7 million, postyear construction.
7. I-2513: Construct a multi-lane freeway from I-26 to US19/23/74. Total length 3.5 miles, cost \$117.5 million, complete 2003.
8. A-10: Construct a four-lane freeway from I-240 in Asheville to Tennessee state line at Sam’s Gap. Total length 30 miles, cost \$298.3 million, in progress, complete 2001.
9. R-2213: Widen US 25 to a five-lane curb and gutter facility from SR 1361 (St. John’s Road) to US 25A (Sweeten Creek Road). Total length 1.7 miles, cost \$6.5 million, complete 2001.

10. R-2214: Widen US 25 to multi-lanes from SR 1528 (Brookside Camp Road) to SR 1361 (St. John's Road). Total length 6.3 miles, cost \$28.6 million, complete 2003.
11. R-2306: Widen US 74 to multi-lanes from I-40 to SR 3136 (Cane Creek Road). Total length 6.7 miles, cost \$34.4 million, in progress, complete 2001.
12. R-2813: Widen NC 146 to a multi-lane curb and gutter facility from NC 191 (Brevard Road) to US 25 (Hendersonville Road). Total length 3.5 miles, cost \$17.7 million, complete 2003.
13. R-2116: Upgrade NC 151 with some relocation from South Hominy to south of SR 1129 (Ridge Road). Total length 4.4 miles, cost \$16.9 million, in progress, complete 2002.
14. R-3318: Pavement rehabilitation on Blue Ridge Parkway from milepost 371.6 to 383.6, cost \$3.7 million, start date 1998.
15. R-3815: Pavement overlay on Blue Ridge Parkway from milepost 383.5 to 393.5, cost \$1.1 million, in progress.
16. R - 3816: Pavement rehabilitation on Blue Ridge Parkway from milepost 359 to 371.6, cost \$3.7 million, start date 1999.
17. U-619: Widen SR 1332 to four lanes from US19/23/74 (Patton Ave.) to SR 1349 (Gorman Road). Total length 1.4 miles, cost \$4.7 million, identified as future need.
18. U-2801: Widen US 25A to multi-lanes from US 25 (Hendersonville Road) to Roberts Road Total length 7.3 miles, cost \$28.1, complete 2002.
19. U-2902: Relocate NC 191 north of I-40 to I-240. Widen NC 191 to multi-lanes south of I-240 at new location. Total length 0.5 mile, cost \$7 million, complete 2001.
20. U-2903: Provide access of NC Arboretum Road adjacent to Blue Ridge Parkway ramp at NC 191 (Brevard Road), cost \$3.8 million, in progress, complete 1998.
21. U-2904: Signal and intersection improvements at US 70/74 (Tunnel/South Tunnel Road) and SR 2863 (New Haw Creek Lane) at the Asheville Mall area, cost \$3.7 million, complete 1999.
22. U-3301: Widen NC 63 to multi-lane at SR 1615 (Whitt Road) to west of SR 1004 (Newfound Road). Total length 4.3 miles, cost 14.3 million, complete 2003.
23. U-3302: Revise the interchange of I-240/US 25 (Merrimon Avenue)/SR 1781 (Broadway Street), cost \$1.3 million, complete 2003.
24. U-3403: Widen NC 191 to multi-lanes from NC 280 to NC 112 (Sardis Road). Total length 9.1 miles, cost \$35.9, complete 2002.
25. U-3404: Widen SR 3214 to multi-lanes from Caledonia Drive to Coxe Avenue Total length 1.1 miles, cost \$6.5 million, identified future need.
26. U-3601: Widen NC 191 to multi-lanes from I-26 to I-40, cost \$5.9 million, start date 2004.

27. U-401: Upgrade SR 1684 from NC 251 (Riverside Drive) to Cottage Street. Total length 0.8 mile, cost \$2.2 million, complete 1998.

WATER AND SEWER

The Asheville-Buncombe Water System is supplied by the North Fork and the Bee Tree Reservoirs with a combined treatment capacity of 30 million gallons per day. The Mills River Water Treatment Plant, which is currently under construction, will draw water from the Mills River in south Buncombe County. The Mills River Plant will be on-line in December 1998 with a treatment capacity of 31 million gallons of water per day. It is projected the three treatment plants will provide an ample water supply for Buncombe County through the year 2020.

During the mid-1980s, the rehabilitation and upgrading of the sewer system became a major concern. The sewer master plan was developed as a prioritized program whereby the sewer system in the corporate city limits of Asheville may be rehabilitated and upgraded to eliminate unsanitary conditions and to plan for areas of potential future growth.

SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

Buncombe County is located in the Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina. It is surrounded by a number of mountain ranges: the Blue Ridge, Great Craggies and Black Mountains on the east, and the Great Smoky Mountains on the west. Elevations range from a low of 1,710 feet to a high of 6,416 feet. Asheville is located at the confluence of the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers, near the center of the French Broad River Basin. The topographic character of the City is composed of wide and often abrupt variations due to ravines created by drainage courses which lead from the higher elevations to the rivers.

The Soil Conservation Service evaluated the thirteen specific soil units within the City of Asheville and rated each soil unit according to its limitations and restrictive features. Each of the soil units were given a slight, moderate, or severe limitation rating based on their capability to support the following uses: local roads and streets, dwelling units, absorption fields for septic tanks, and any shallow excavations. A slight rating identifies soil properties favorable for each of these specific units. Those with a moderate rating had limited conditions for development which could be overcome by specific planning. A severe limitation rating was given to soils found unfavorable for the specific uses but those of which could be improved through costly soil reclamation and special planning.

A soils map for the City of Asheville has been prepared by the Soil Conservation Service noting areas of a severe nature including areas of: steep slope; steep slope and shallow depth to rock; areas where steep slope and cutbanks which cave easily; areas susceptible to flooding and wetness; flooding, wetness and cutbanks which cave easily; flooding, wetness, and cutbanks which cave easily and soil which filters poorly; and low soil strength. In 1986, a hillside ordinance for the City was adopted regulating residential group developments at elevations on or above 2,220 feet above mean sea level. The ordinance encompasses much of aforementioned soil areas with severe limitations to development.

The soils in Asheville and Buncombe County can be categorized into three different soil groups.

Soils found along the major rivers and streams are:

- Tate Urban Land Complex is found along streams and creeks. It is somewhat sloping and can have drainage and water management concerns. It is reasonably fertile with proper management. Most recreation uses can be accommodated.
- Iotla, Biltmore, Toxaway, and French Loams are floodplain soils found in the flat areas adjacent to streams and rivers. These are productive agricultural soils, but are not suited for residential or commercial development due to flooding and water management issues. Recreational uses need to be carefully chosen due to flooding.

Soils in the rolling interior basin are:

- Hayesville and Braddock soils are moderately to strongly sloping clay soils that are well drained. These soils have slight to moderate limitations for most recreational land use concerns.
- Evard-Porters Urban Land Complex and Brevard Loam soils are moderately steep, eroded upland soils. They are moderately well drained and have rocks close to the surface. There are limitations to these soils due to slope, rock, and erosion potential.
- Fannin and Dillard Loams consist of deep or very deep moderately well drained soils found on sloping stream terraces and mountain toe slopes. Internal drainage can be a concern, as well as erosion problems. Therefore, these soils have moderate to severe limitations for recreational uses.

Soils found on the mountain slopes and ridges are:

- Tusquitee-Tate-Brevard soils consist of deep, well drained slight to steeply sloping soils found on the footslopes and side slopes of the mountains. They have significant erosion limitations and water management issues. Recreational uses can have moderate limitations.
- Evard and Saluda soils are shallow, well drained, and steeply sloping soils found around the Asheville Basin. These soils have rock on or near the soil surface. Limitations for recreational use are severe due to the erosion potential and development concerns.
- Burton and Porter Rock Outcrop Complex are soils found on steep mountain side slopes and ridges. Rock is prevalent on the soil surface. These soils have severe limitations for most recreational uses. Low impact activities such as hiking trails can be successfully installed.

ENVIRONMENT OPEN SPACE AND WATERSHEDS

Watershed regulations for the protection of drinking water are state-mandated through the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission. Watersheds have been classified into five areas primarily based upon the amount of development allowed within each zone. The essence of these regulations is to maintain or increase the quality of potable water supplies by limiting development of impervious areas within a particular area of the watershed. The amount of built upon area allowed varies with each classification of the watershed and the distance it is from the reservoir site.

Watershed areas and water storage facilities are located at the following sites: Clearwell at North Fork, White Fawn Reservoir, Beaucatcher Reservoir, South Buncombe Tank, Mills Gap Tank, Mt. Royal Tank, Rosscraggon Tank, Lutheridge Tank, Mine Hole Gap Tank, Youngs Cove Tank, Patton Mountain Tank, Peach Knob Tank, Gumperts Tank, Allen Mountain Reservoir, Riceville Forest, Oteen, and West Asheville Tank.

Concern with protecting the environment is increasingly important to the general public as information on preservation, conservation, and protection is more readily available and understood. More people, especially younger people, are concerned with the physical and aesthetic issues that demand attention in order to provide the commodities we need to survive comfortably: clean air and water, adequate food and shelter, and space to recreate and release stress from everyday life. The amount of open land for protection of plant and animal habitats has become more important to our society and our personal well-being as we have urbanized. The public has awakened to these needs and their demand for more open space for passive recreation and aesthetic enjoyment will continue to grow. The demand has initiated a trend by local governments to acquire open space for watershed protection, regional parks, and greenways. The public demands have also propelled local governments to require developers to incorporate open space areas as part of a project's plan. The start of open space initiatives is an attempt to link parks, environmental features, and other "people spaces" to form a diverse network of green space that will benefit the entire region.

UNIQUE NATURAL AREAS

Buncombe County is located in the Appalachian Mountains, among the oldest mountain ranges in the world. It is surrounded by several major natural areas located in the southeastern United States. The Pisgah National Forest is located in the southwest corner of the County; the Blue Ridge Parkway traverses through the central and eastern sections of the County; and the Great Smokey National Park is located 50 miles to the west where it straddles the North Carolina-Tennessee state line. In addition, open space is located along the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers.

The Land of Sky Regional Council has prepared an Analysis of Sensitive Natural Areas for the four-county region of Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties. The study identifies unique or exemplary natural ecosystems, rare species habitat, special wildlife habitat, and scenic areas. There are 76 recorded unique sensitive areas in the region, of which 16 are located in Buncombe County. Ten are considered to be of significant value and recommended for the state natural areas registry. Six require more complete field evaluation to determine significant value. The areas in Buncombe County are:

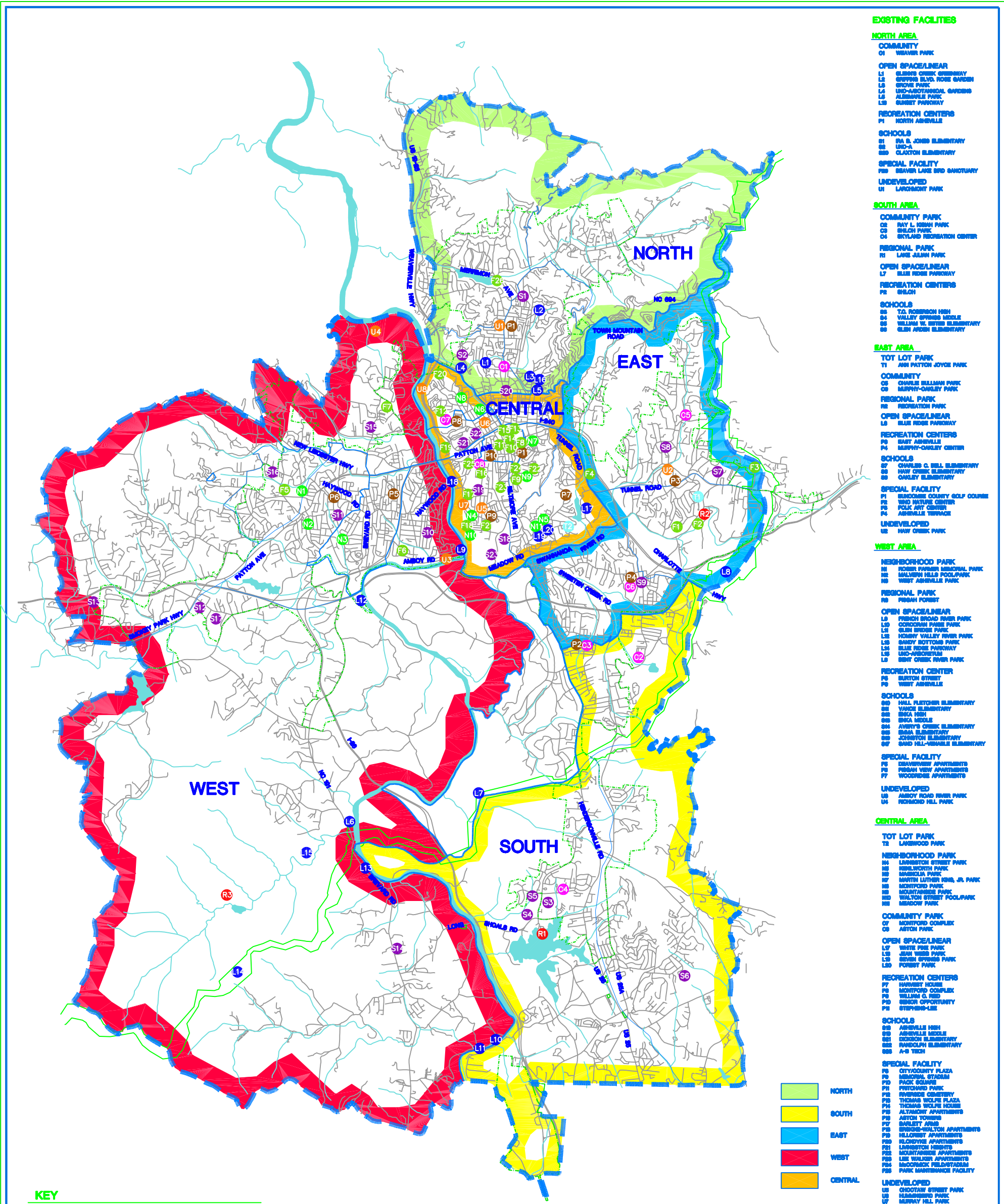
- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Sandy Mush and Turkey Creek Gorges | 9. Montreat Watershed |
| 2. Flat Creek Gorge | 10. Bull Gap |
| 3. Reems Creek Gorge | 11. Cedar Cliff-Little Cedar Mt. |
| 4. Ogle Meadow | 12. Laurel Branch |
| 5. North Fork Ivey Creek Cove | 13. Bent Creek Shoals |
| 6. Walker Falls-Walker Creek Natural Area | 14. Hickorynut Gap |

7. Craggy Pinnacle

15. Long Shoals Swamp

8. Asheville Watershed

16. Mt. Pisgah



EXISTING FACILITIES

NORTH AREA

- COMMUNITY
C1 WEAVER PARK
- OPEN SPACE/LINEAR
L1 GLENN CREEK OVERWAY
L2 GUYTON BLVD. ROSE GARDEN
L3 GROVE PARK
L4 UNO-ARCTANAL GARDENS
L5 ALLENDALE PARK
L6 SUNSET PARKWAY
- RECREATION CENTERS
P1 NORTH ASHEVILLE
- SCHOOLS
S1 PA B. JONES ELEMENTARY
S2 UNO-A
S3 CLAYTON ELEMENTARY
- SPECIAL FACILITY
F10 BEAVER LAKE BND SHOOTWAY
- UNDEVELOPED
U1 LARGEMOUNT PARK

SOUTH AREA

- COMMUNITY PARK
C2 RAY L. JONES PARK
C3 SHELCH PARK
C4 BAYLAND RECREATION CENTER
- REGIONAL PARK
R1 LAKE JULIAN PARK
- OPEN SPACE/LINEAR
L7 BLUE ROSE PARKWAY
- RECREATION CENTERS
P2 SHELCH
- SCHOOLS
S5 T.O. ROBINSON HIGH
S4 VALLEY SPRING MIDDLE
S6 WILLIAM W. BATES ELEMENTARY
S8 GLEN ARDEN ELEMENTARY

EAST AREA

- TOT LOT PARK
T1 ANN PATTON JOYCE PARK
- COMMUNITY
C5 CHARLES WILLIAM PARK
C6 MURPHY-OWLEY PARK
- REGIONAL PARK
R2 RECREATION PARK
- OPEN SPACE/LINEAR
L8 BLUE ROSE PARKWAY
- RECREATION CENTERS
P3 EAST ASHEVILLE
P4 MURPHY-OWLEY CENTER
- SCHOOLS
S7 CHARLES C. BELL ELEMENTARY
S9 HAY CREEK ELEMENTARY
S10 OWLEY ELEMENTARY
- SPECIAL FACILITY
F1 BUNCOMBE COUNTY GOLF COURSE
F2 BIRD HAVENS CENTER
F3 POLK ART CENTER
F4 ASHEVILLE TOWNHALL
- UNDEVELOPED
U2 HAY CREEK PARK

WEST AREA

- NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
N1 TIGER PARK MEMORIAL PARK
N2 MALVERN HILLS POOL/PARK
N3 WEST ASHEVILLE PARK
- REGIONAL PARK
R3 PIRANAH FOREST
- OPEN SPACE/LINEAR
L9 FRENCH BROAD RIVER PARK
L10 CORDON ROSE PARK
L11 GLEN BROOK PARK
L12 HONEY VALLEY RIVER PARK
L13 SANDY BOTTOMS PARK
L14 BLUE ROSE PARKWAY
L15 UNO-HIGHWAY
L16 BENT CREEK RIVER PARK
- RECREATION CENTER
P5 BURTON STREET
P6 WEST ASHEVILLE
- SCHOOLS
S100 HALL FLETCHER ELEMENTARY
S101 VANCE ELEMENTARY
S102 BRICA HIGH
S103 BRICA MIDDLE
S104 AVERY'S CREEK ELEMENTARY
S105 BRICA ELEMENTARY
S106 CHANTON ELEMENTARY
S107 SAND HILL-VENABLE ELEMENTARY
- SPECIAL FACILITY
F5 TEAHOUSE APARTMENTS
F6 PIRANAH VIEW APARTMENTS
F7 WOODBRIDGE APARTMENTS
- UNDEVELOPED
U3 ARROY ROAD RIVER PARK
U4 REDMOND HILL PARK

CENTRAL AREA

- TOT LOT PARK
T2 LARGEMOUNT PARK
- NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
N4 LINCOLN STREET PARK
N5 REDMOND PARK
N6 MANICULA PARK
N7 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK
N8 MONTFORD PARK
N9 MOUNTAINVIEW PARK
N10 WALTON STREET POOL/PARK
N11 MEADOW PARK
- COMMUNITY PARK
C7 MONTFORD COMPLEX
C8 ASTON PARK
- OPEN SPACE/LINEAR
L17 WHITE PINE PARK
L18 JEAN WOOD PARK
L19 BROWN SPRING PARK
L20 FOREST PARK
- RECREATION CENTERS
P7 HARBEST HOUSE
P8 MONTFORD COMPLEX
P9 WILLIAM G. WOOD
P10 BROWN OPPORTUNITY
P11 STEPHENS-LIE
- SCHOOLS
S108 ASHEVILLE HIGH
S109 ASHEVILLE MIDDLE
S110 DIXON ELEMENTARY
S111 HANCOCK ELEMENTARY
S112 A-S TECH
- SPECIAL FACILITY
F6 CITYCOUNTY PLAZA
F7 MURPHY STADIUM
F8 PARK SQUARE
F9 PIRANAH PARK
F10 HARBEST CEMETERY
F11 THOMAS WOLFE PLAZA
F12 THOMAS WOLFE HOUSE
F13 ALTYMEIST APARTMENTS
F14 ASTON TOWERS
F15 BARKLEY ARMS
F16 BROWN-HILTON APARTMENTS
F17 HARBEST APARTMENTS
F18 KLOEYNE APARTMENTS
F19 LINCOLN TOWERS
F20 MOUNTAINVIEW APARTMENTS
F21 LEE WALKER APARTMENTS
F22 MCKINCKY FIELDSTADIUM
F23 PARK HARBESTHOUSE FACILITY
- UNDEVELOPED
U5 CHOCOTAW STREET PARK
U6 HARBEST PARK
U7 MURRAY HILL PARK
U8 PIRANAH BROAD RIVER PARK

- NORTH
- SOUTH
- EAST
- WEST
- CENTRAL

- KEY
- TOT LOT PARK
 - NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
 - LINEAR/OPEN SPACE
 - UNDEVELOPED
 - RECREATION CENTERS
 - SPECIAL FACILITY
 - COMMUNITY PARK
 - REGIONAL PARK
 - SCHOOLS

Existing Facilities Map

2015 COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

City of Asheville, NC